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Three
Seasons'
Flowers



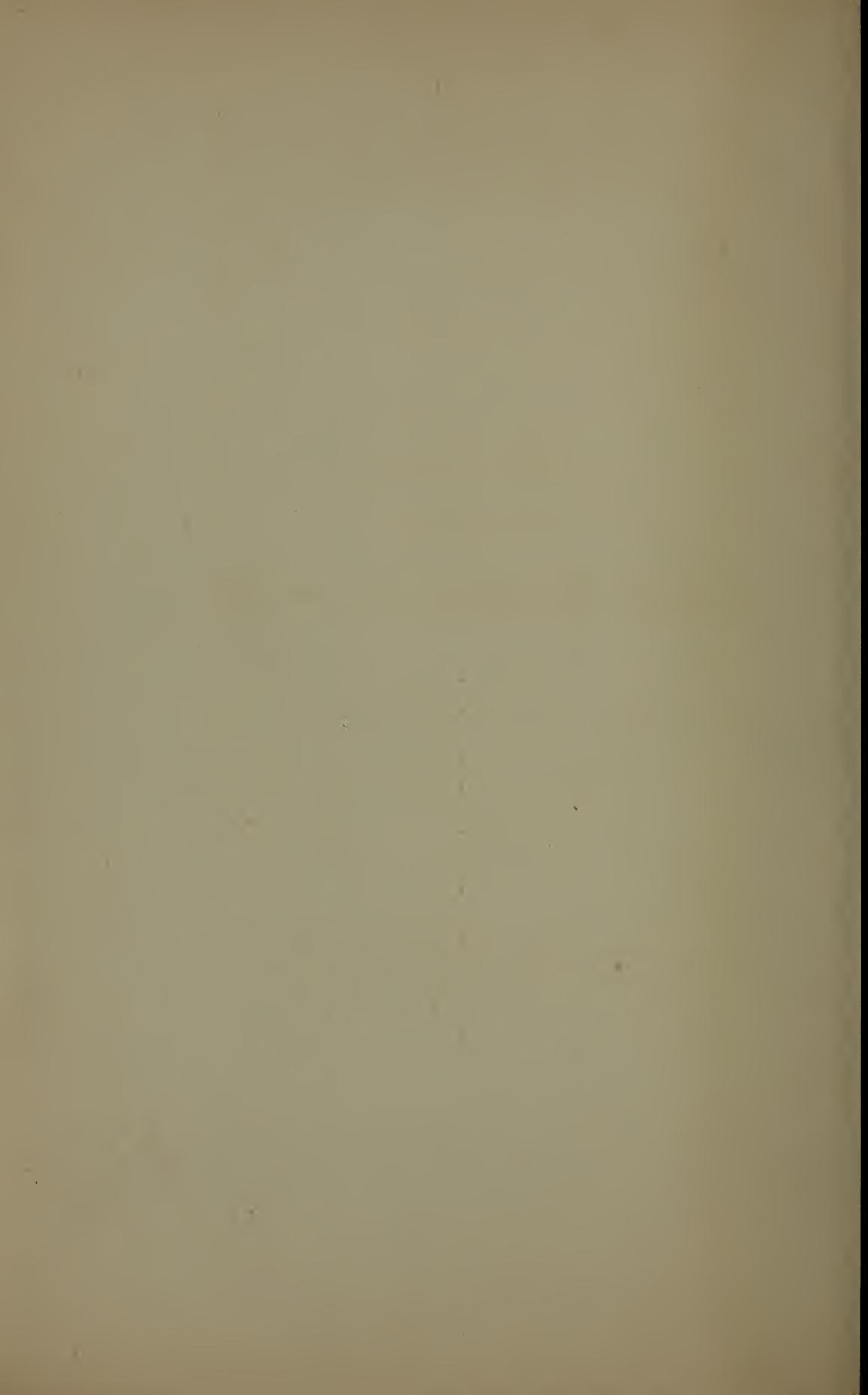


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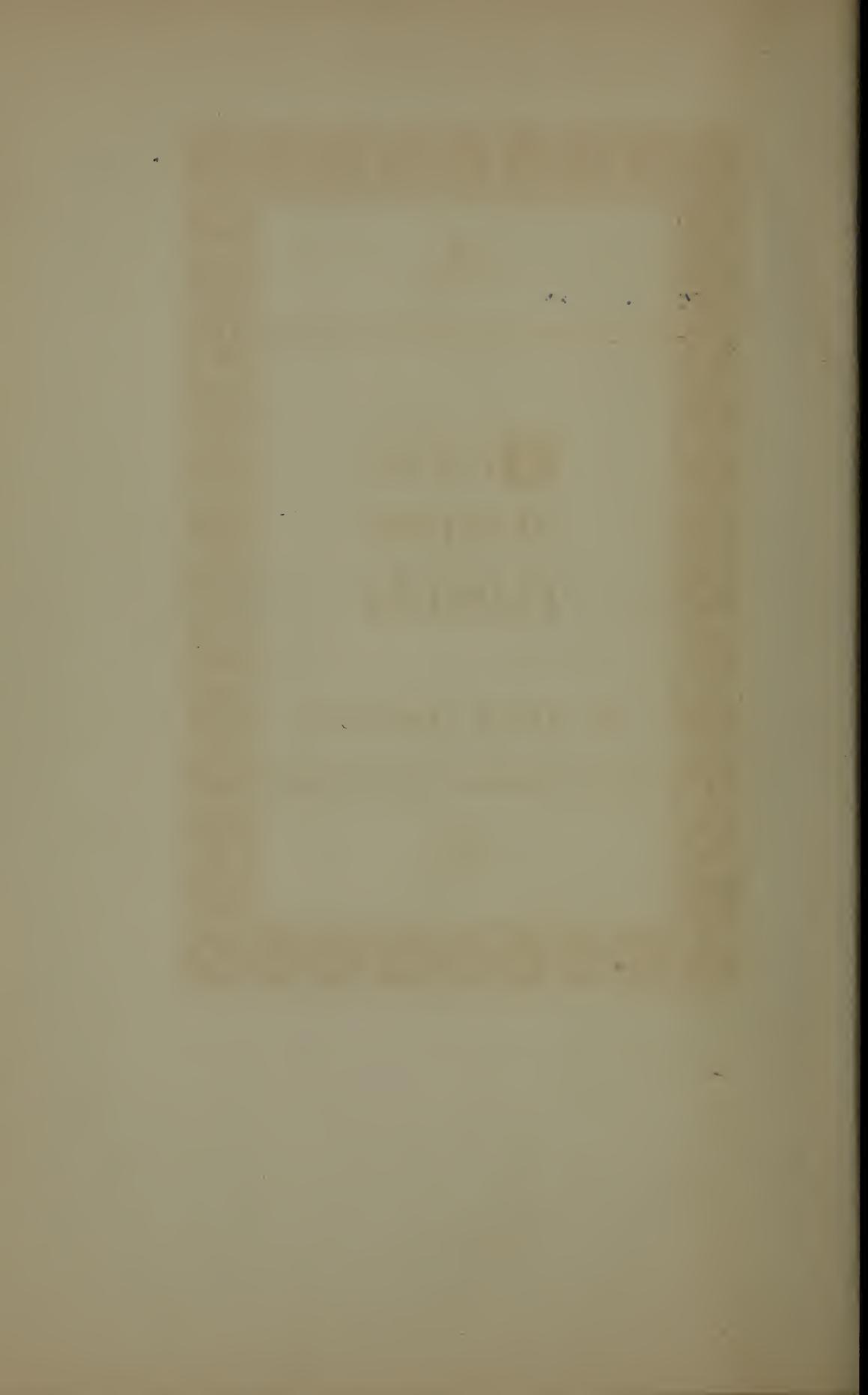
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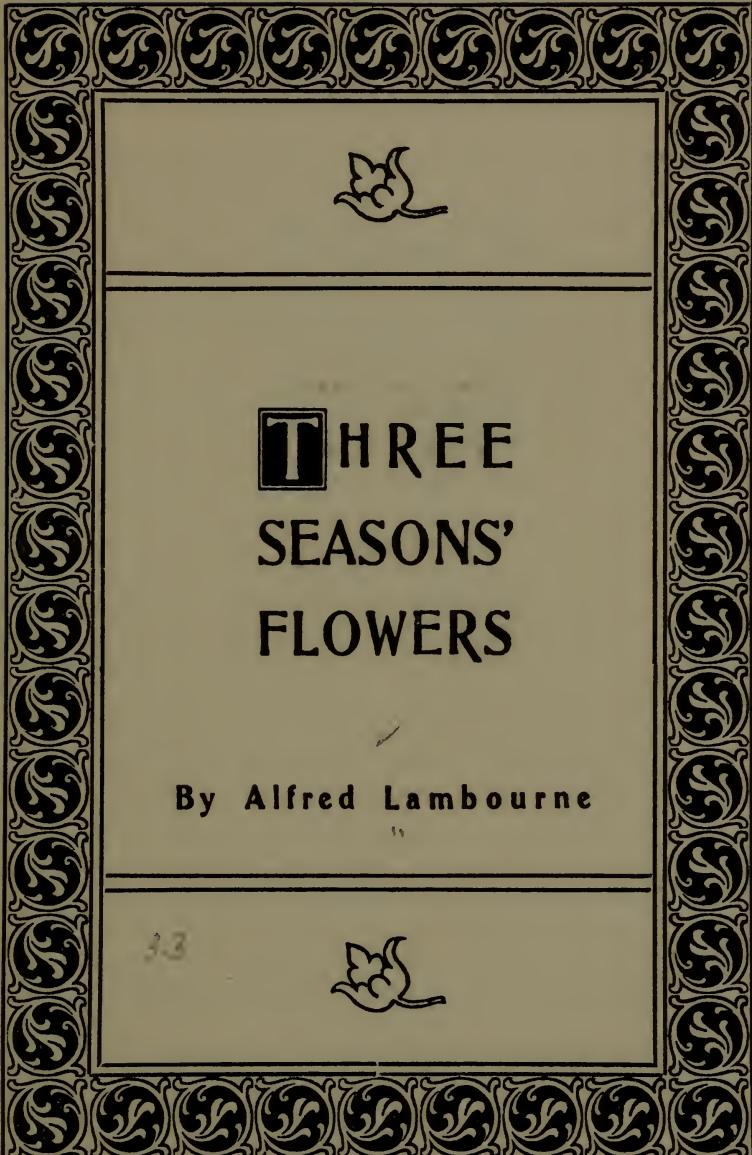
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THREE SEASONS' FLOWERS

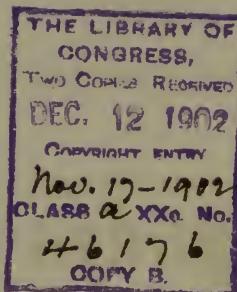




THREE
SEASONS'
FLOWERS

By Alfred Lambourne



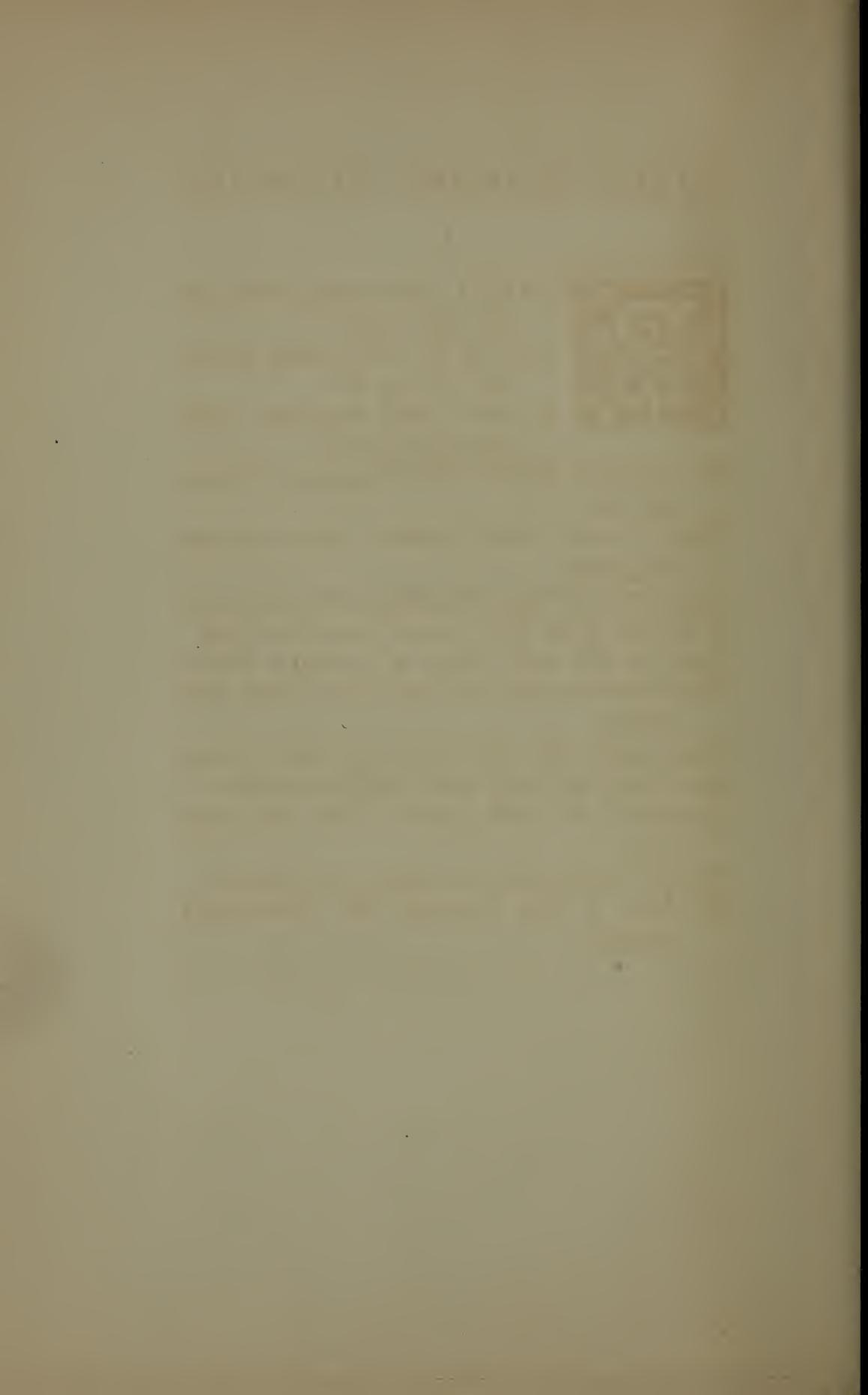


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To My Wife

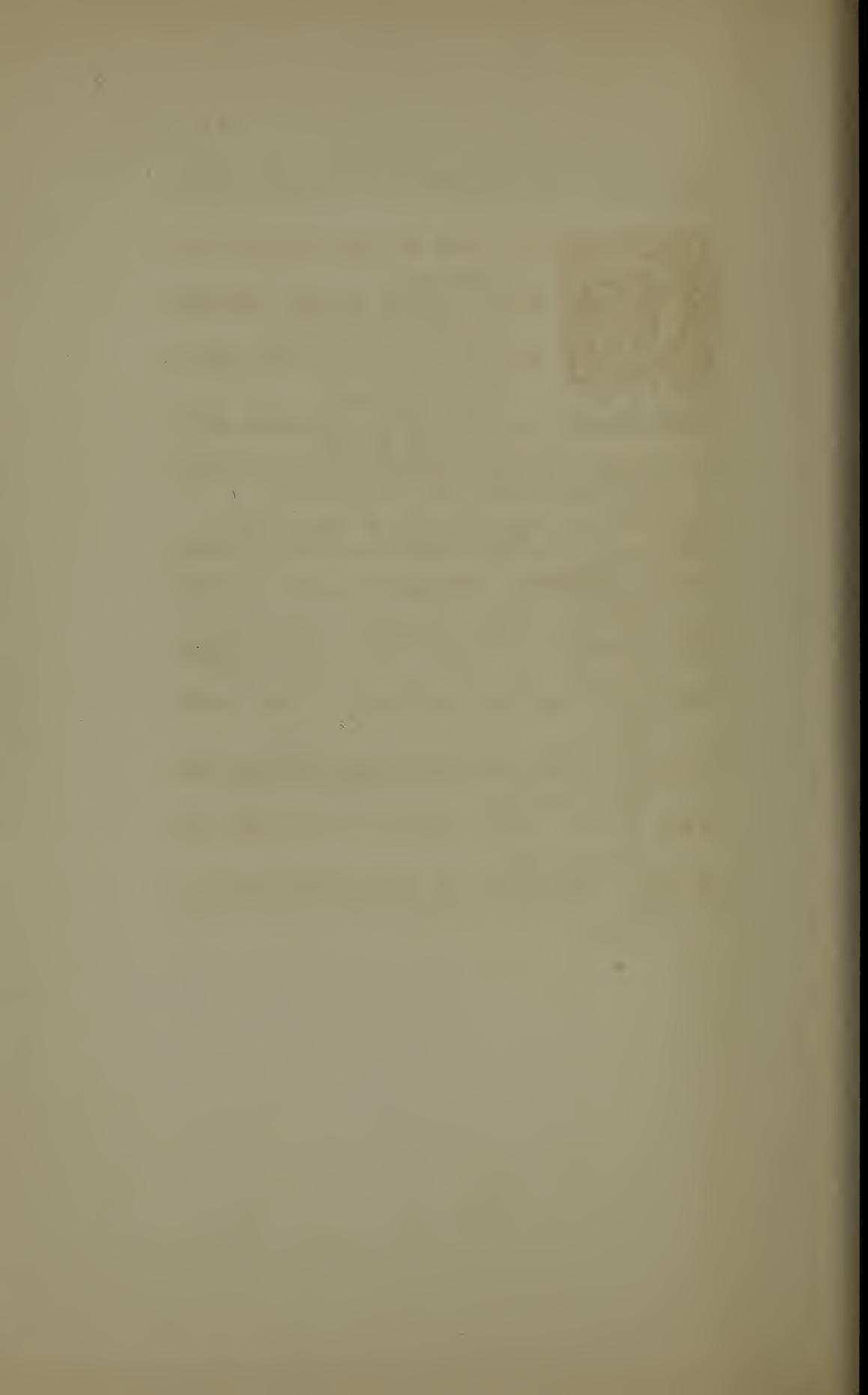


THREE SEASONS' FLOWERS

I.



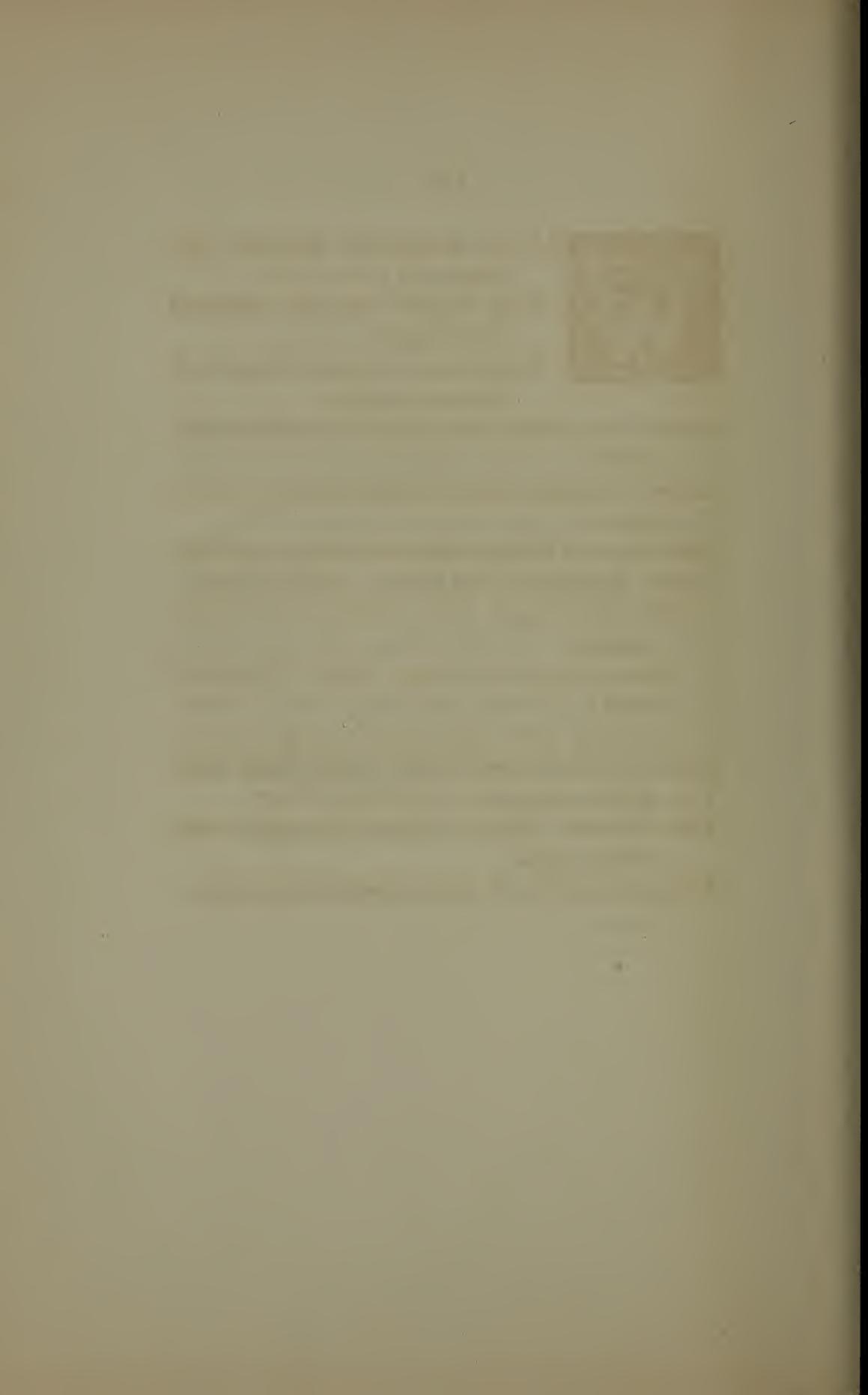
EHOLD, how spring doth ope
the lilac buds!
And oh, for words that choice
and dainty be
To tell how memory each
moment floods,
Of vanished dreams their fragrance brings
to me!
What words shall their exquisiteness
suggest,
The blanched edge, the flush within the cell,
A hidden glow like vermil hues that rest
Deep in the cold heart of a tropic shell?
These leaves take on the fire of pink and
white,
That marks the advent of the eastern ray,
And this they hold with chilliness unite,
Quenched in cold azure of the showery
day.
No line hath power to utter my delight,
As here I rest beneath the blossomed
spray!



II.



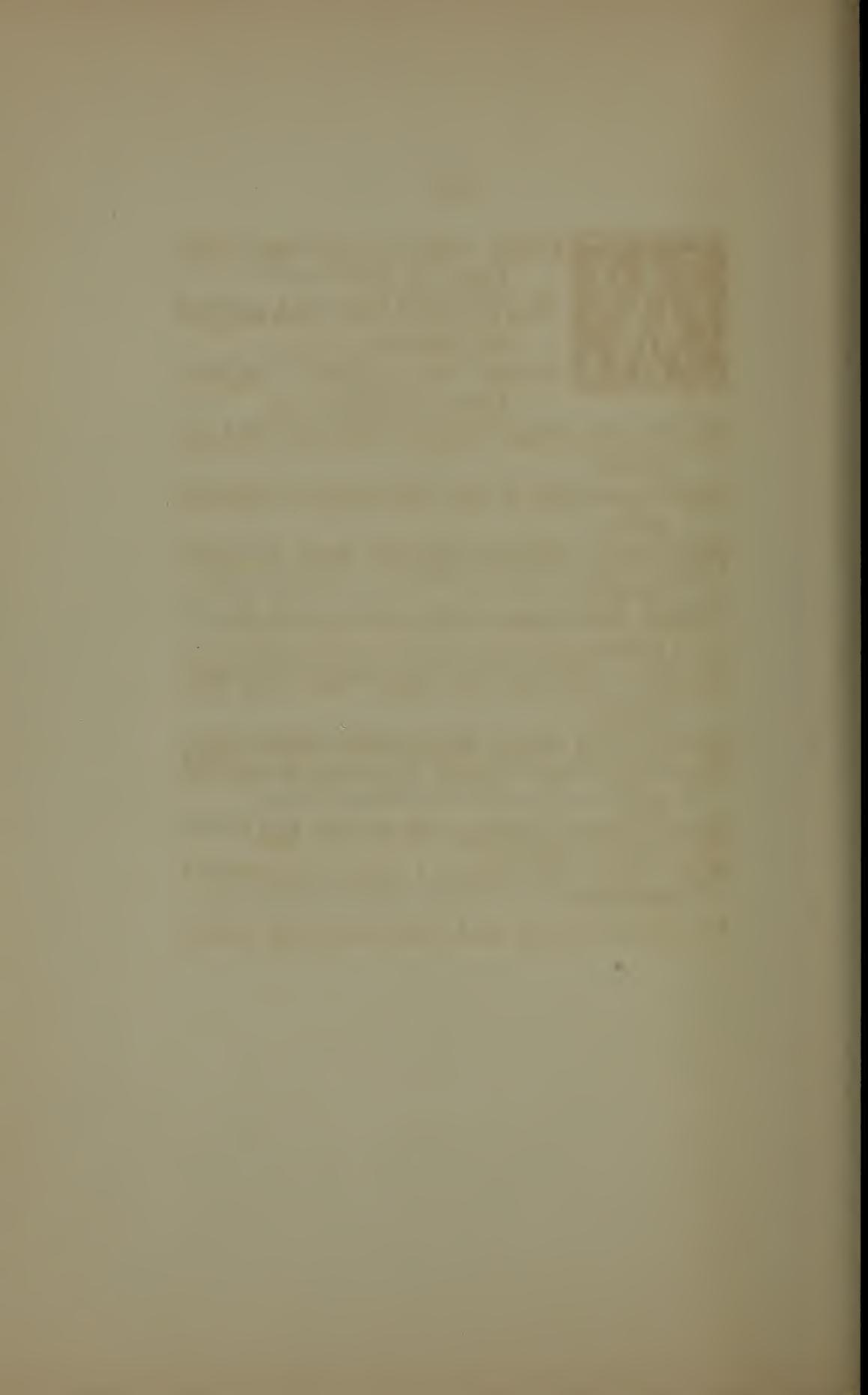
AN, after all, that legend be a truth—
That mystic spring whereof men long to drink,
Whose waters hold the gift of lasting youth,
And mortal flesh with joys immortal link ?
The inner life doth with this essence wake;
A youth perpetual the lilacs bring;
My thirst of soul therein, I eager slake,
And draw a subtle virtue from the spring !
Here, childlike innocence and passion blend;
The rapture of the May, all fragrant sleeps;
For fond hope lost and trust, they make amend,
As through the heart life's springtime once more sweeps;
This bloom hath treasure brought me without end,
A calm doth give to manhood's stormy deeps.



III.



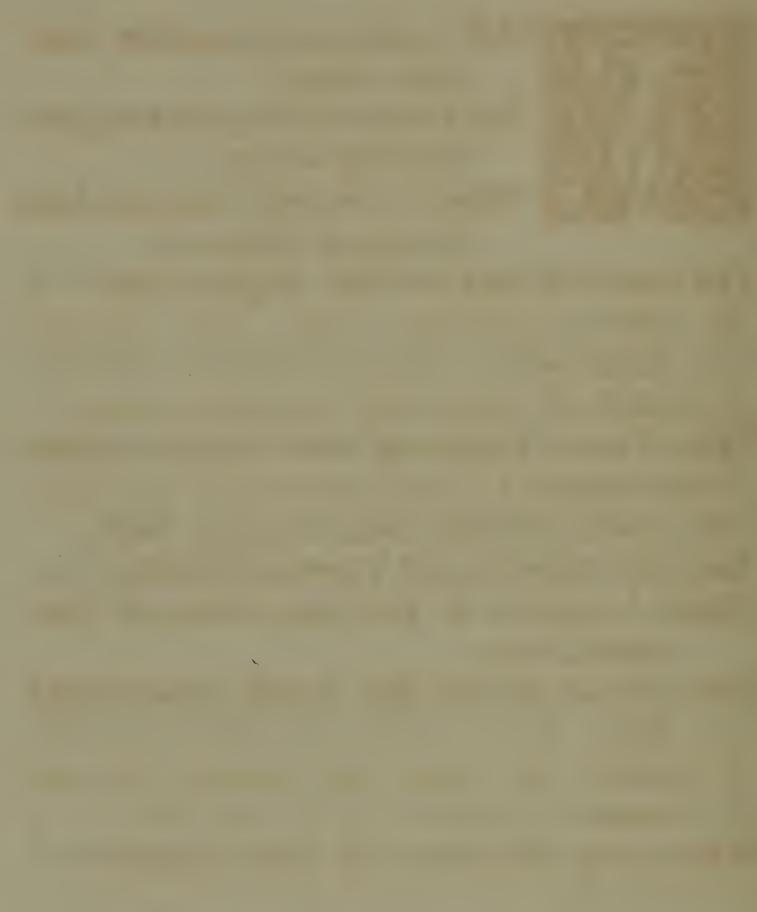
IT H moisture strange, the
lilacs fill mine eyes,
A gladsome dew that gathers
into tears;
Entranced I stand, lost in a
sweet surprise,
While joys divine come back from out the
years.
Some purpose was there in the pregnant
past—
The cause of transports sent unto our time?
These lilacs seem as from a garden cast,
Which flourished once within the happy
prime.
A sweet ingenuousness these blossoms
hold,
Which they unto that primal purpose owe;
Secrete there dwells amid each leafy fold,
The golden age that antedated woe.
This scented bloom rebreathes the troths
were told—
The artless life of some sweet long ago.



I V.



GAIN with spring the lilac
doth not fail,
The Lord of Day makes glad
his wide demesne,
Sweet Hesperides night's
deeps of ether sail,
The far-stretched valleys melt in lucious
green.
And high above the mountains' shining
snow,
The silver clouds up-build their massive
towers.
I watch the scented clusters open slow,
And feel myself once more in fairy bowers.
Awake! and yet so soon thou art be-
trayed,—
Ere one can count, the occult virtue dies!
And then, how quick my irised visions
fade,
My dreamland palace, all in ruin lies!
With you, O' lilacs, I have backward
strayed
To May of youth and April-weeping skies.



V.



H E roses snap asunder mat-
ter's chain,
And leave the soul to wander
free the while,
Where art and nature hold
an equal reign—

On templed rocks of far Ægean isle,
By dim Euphrates and old Egypt's
stream—

And with all poets their emotions share,
With Omar, Orpheus, and Sappho, dream
What splendid is and passionate and fair.

Oh, now I list the sirens singing clear,
Beyond Pelorus and Tyrrhenian sea;
Shrill laughter of the green-haired mer-
maids hear;

The dark-eyed Persian maidens well nigh
see,

Where all the vales are crimson far and
near,

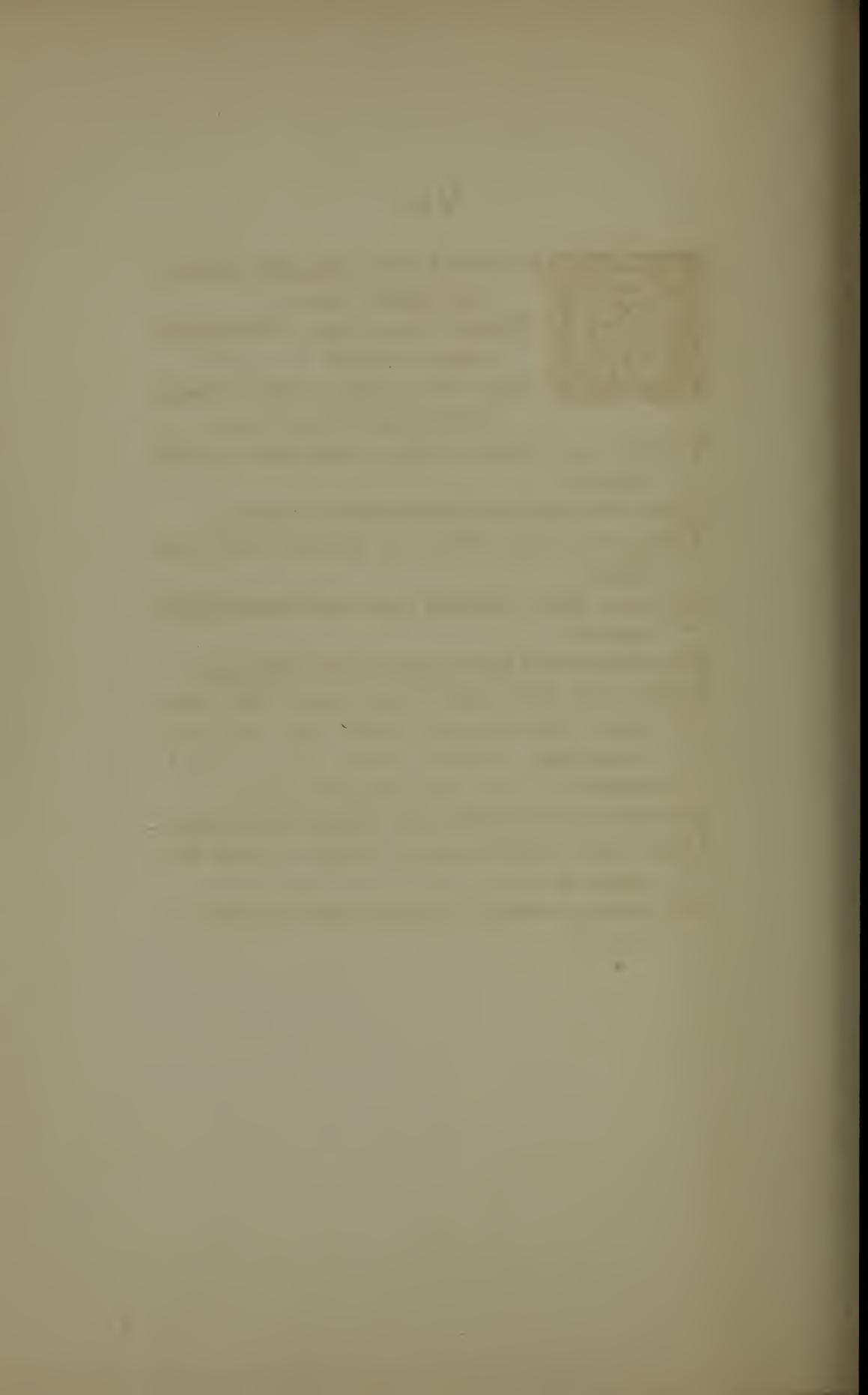
Scattering flowers at the Gul Reazee.



V I.



ROSE-PURPLE are the mountain peaks by day,
'Neath cloudless skies, all purple-brown by night;
And when the rising moon begins her sway,
A hush profound falls over vale and height.
Upon the roses' splendor let me gloat,
Or on fond lips now waste my heart in sighs;
Love's fulness throbs and bubbles at the throat,
The sweets of life are mine in richest guise.
What more could heart or soul from nature claim,
Now that no canker eats away love's health?
Love has no purpose, leaves all other aim,
Than this, to gather up the offered wealth:
The roses' bounty I tell o'er, the same
As greedy misers count their gold, in stealth.



VII.



F LOVE triumphant—love's
delightful pain,
Behold the rose, a symbol
and a sign!

Let no rough hand, with
vandal touch, profane

The flower whose beauty makes its life
divine.

O, to the passion that within it burns,
This grace, these hues of damask witness
bear.

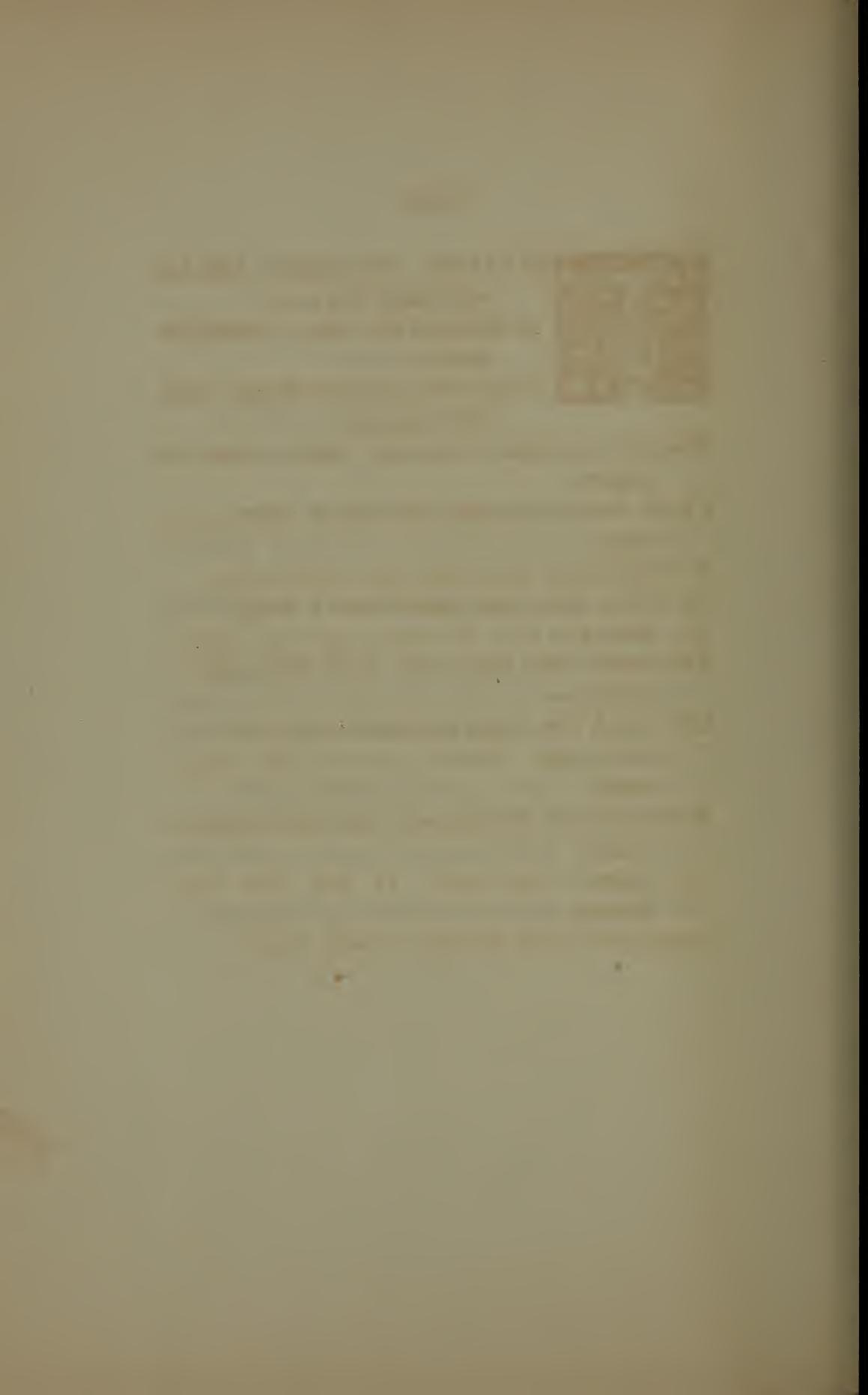
So, too, this boon of outward semblance
turns

To ravishment the ache of old despair.

In this full time, this hey-day of the year,
My soul, en rapport with the fairness
wrought,

Goes with all joy upon its swift career
To find itself to this one lesson brought—
Here with the queenly rose, I gird the
sphere,

All earth possess, in luxury of thought.



VIII.

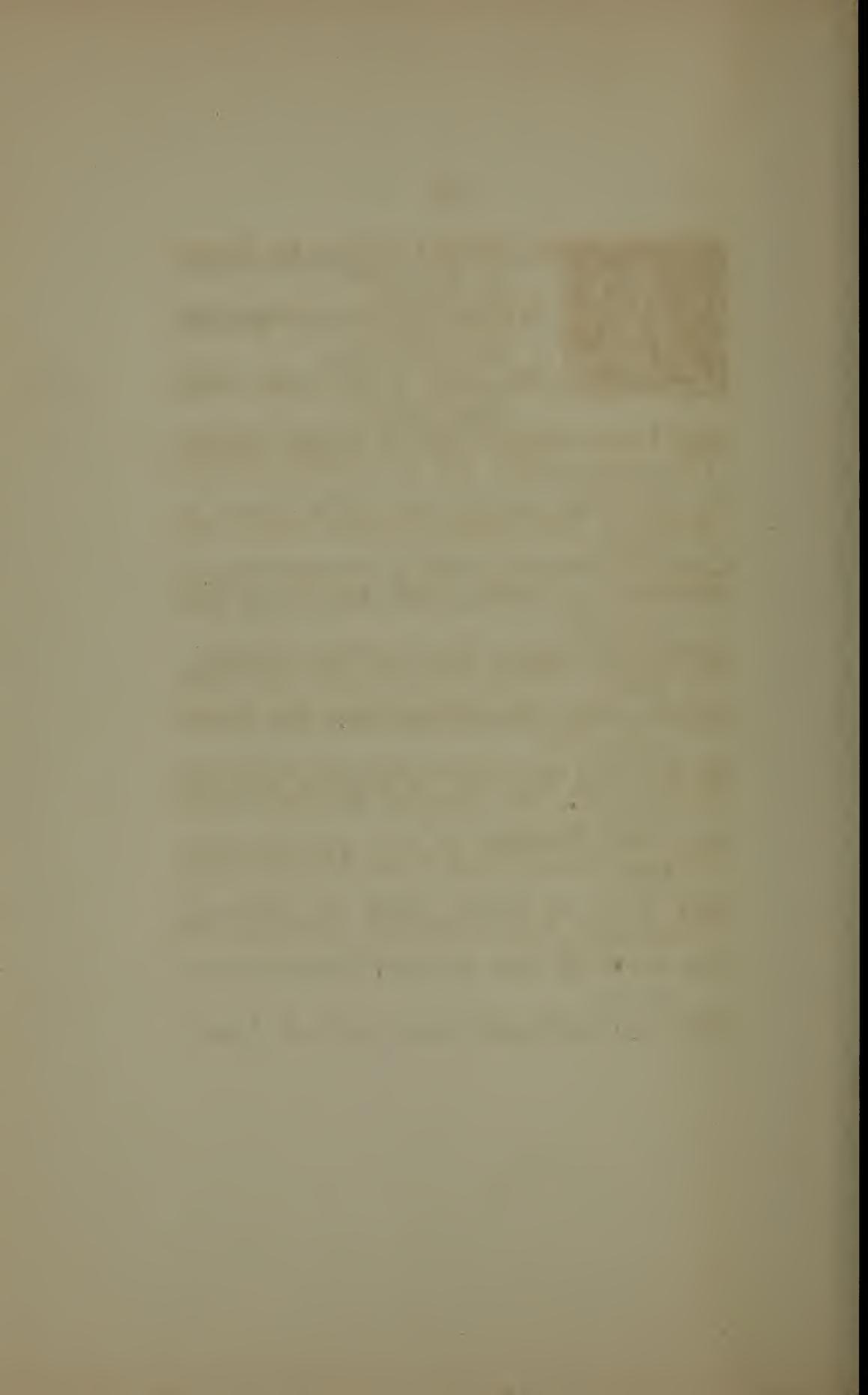


HE rose! the rose! Ah, let
me clasp the rose!
A witness she that beauty is
eterne.
O, my heart's tumult here can
find repose;
Here in content, the soul may cease to
yearn.
From love's excess, the poet now must
sing—
A voice must find unto his noble rage;
O, to the rose my vassal love I bring,
Ah, may she live for once upon my page!
The rose! the rose! O, now the rose is
queen—
Love and the roses animate my line!
O, love's own flower, as o'er the rose I
lean,
Makes drunk the senses and this heart of
mine;
The rose! the rose! O yes, the rose
serene
Intoxicates with beauty as with wine!

IX.



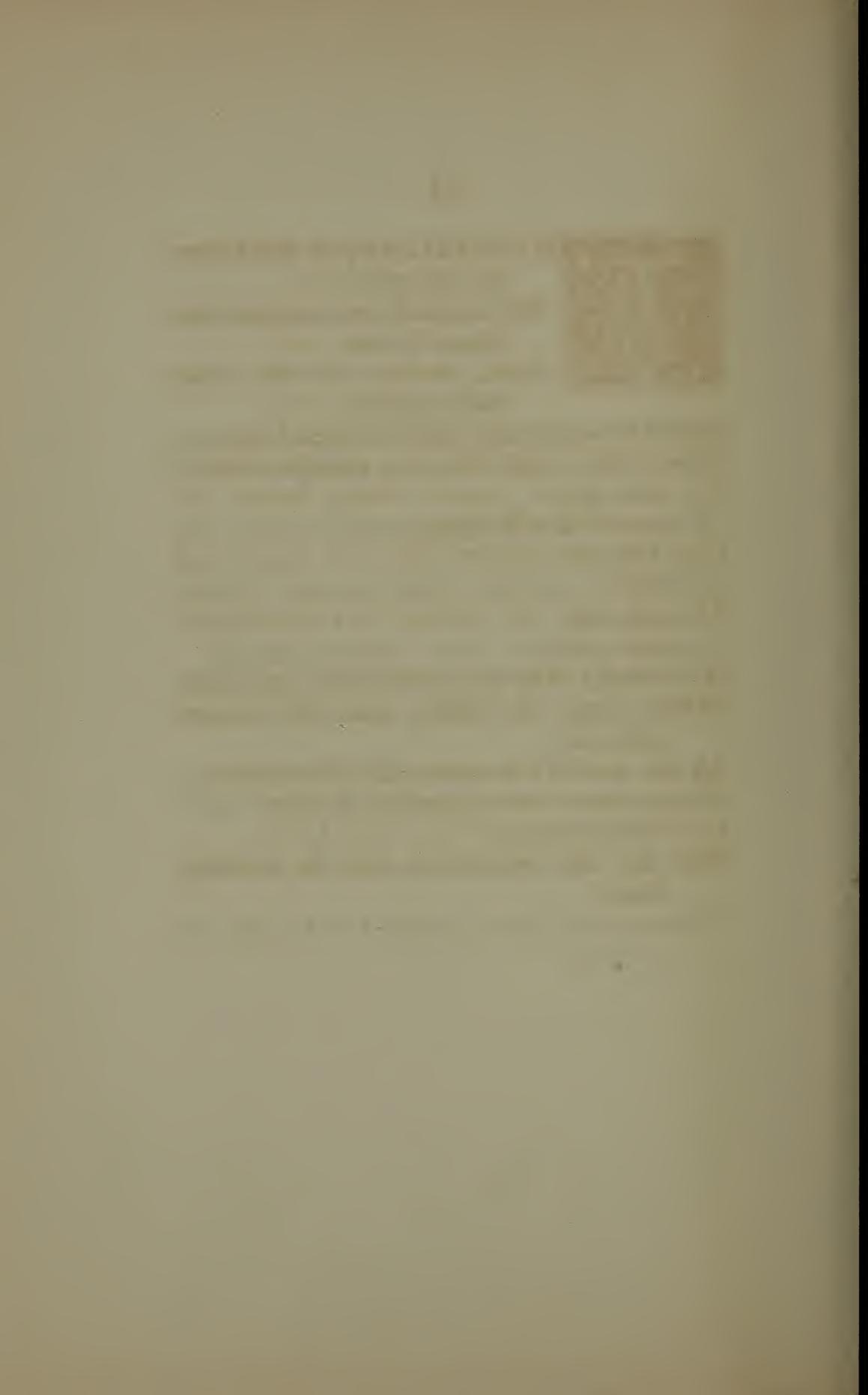
H, NOW is taught the wisest
of all lore,
And like this Lovers' Month,
the roses glow,
Enamored youth upon each
other pore,
And love's sweet tale in words impas-
sioned flow.
To thousand hearts the bridal hymn is
sung,
Conjugal vows are made in whispered tone;
The rose, the rose, as wedding bells are
swung,
All thought makes fervid as the burning
zone.
Sun-flushed or tear'd with dew, the petals
gleam
By lustrous day, or in night's tranced
noon;
With honied wealth of life, the moments
teem,
And heart to heart melts in delicious
swoon.
Can aught of fear or strife disturb love's
dream,
Made perfect by the roses—gift of June?



X.



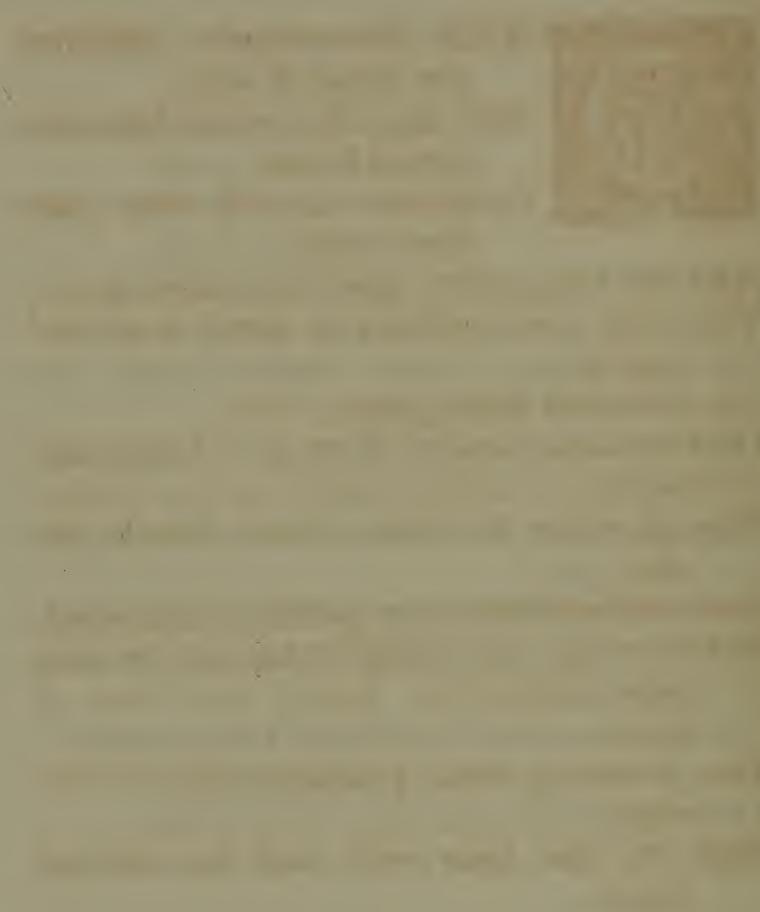
H, PEERLESS is the beauty
of the rose!
Within its heart, a magic deep
there hides;
But love to love its riches
will disclose,
And I have learned the secret there abides.
The roses take me to nymph-haunted
founts,
Where'er this golden summer moon now
shines;
Dodonas' woods, and purple classic
mounts,
Astarte's, Venus', Isis,' broken shrines.
To Athens, Thebes, lost Baylon, and Tyre;
Where sings the bulbul and where moans
the dove;
Where still the temple tells of fond desire;
Where fanes are grassed, or where sands
drift above;
All places where hath burned the heavenly
fire,
Where men have dreamed of beauty and
of love!



X I.



TOUCHED by a pale light from
the autumn sun,
The massed chrysanthemums
droop by the path,
Calm, serious flowers that
mad passion shun,
And life begin now others ended hath.
To me they seem like to a pensive child,
As one given those whose heads are
touched with gray;
Like this wan season, they are tame and
mild,
Though they be decked in colors bright
and gay.
In harmony they come with this dim morn,
When wrapt in chilly mist all nature
grieves.
As she would fall asleep all labor-worn,
A sigh the universal mother heaves,
Delivers to the year her latest born,
Nipt by the hoar-frost, hid by drifting
leaves.



XII.



YES, November's children
are these flowers,
And they the vernal joys can
never know;
In listless apathy they pass
the hours,
And see the garden aged and faded grow.
Yes, they are symbols of these days and
nights,
An evolution fitting heavy time,
Of this dark month, all empty of delights,
Whose humor sullen saddens every rhyme.
Now slow the northern clouds invade the
sky,
And shadows thick, the garden overspread,
But here the tardy blossoms meet the eye,
A senile brightness 'gainst the hues of
lead;
The moaning wind proclaims the winter
nigh,
Tells that the year will soon be cold and
dead.



XIII.



WITH thy coming, light and
cheer depart,
Cold bloom of sadness, au-
tumn's last of flowers.
To rueful days thy life is set
apart

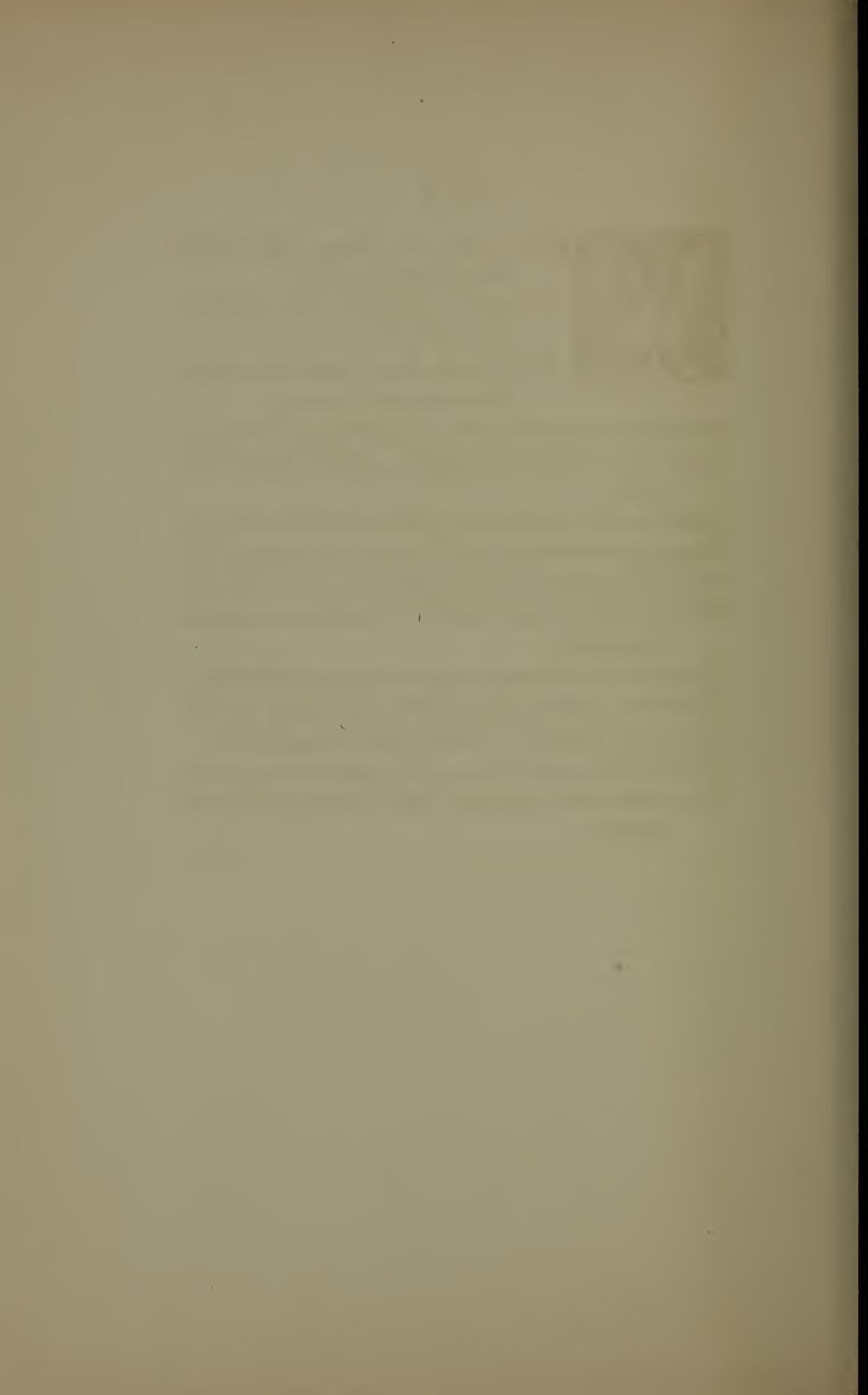
When o'er decrepitude a wild sky lowers.
I see thy lissome petals that unclose
To see the sun behind a thickened veil.
Thou diest soon, for lo! the whirling snows,
The ruthless archer's shafts of sleet and
hail!
Yet pass, though on thy death pale dole
attends,
The changed time is vocal with lament;
Not thou alone must go, here quickly ends
That mood whose loss the year makes in-
digent.
O'er thee, sad flower, the winged storm
impends,
And the short season of thy life is spent.



XIV.

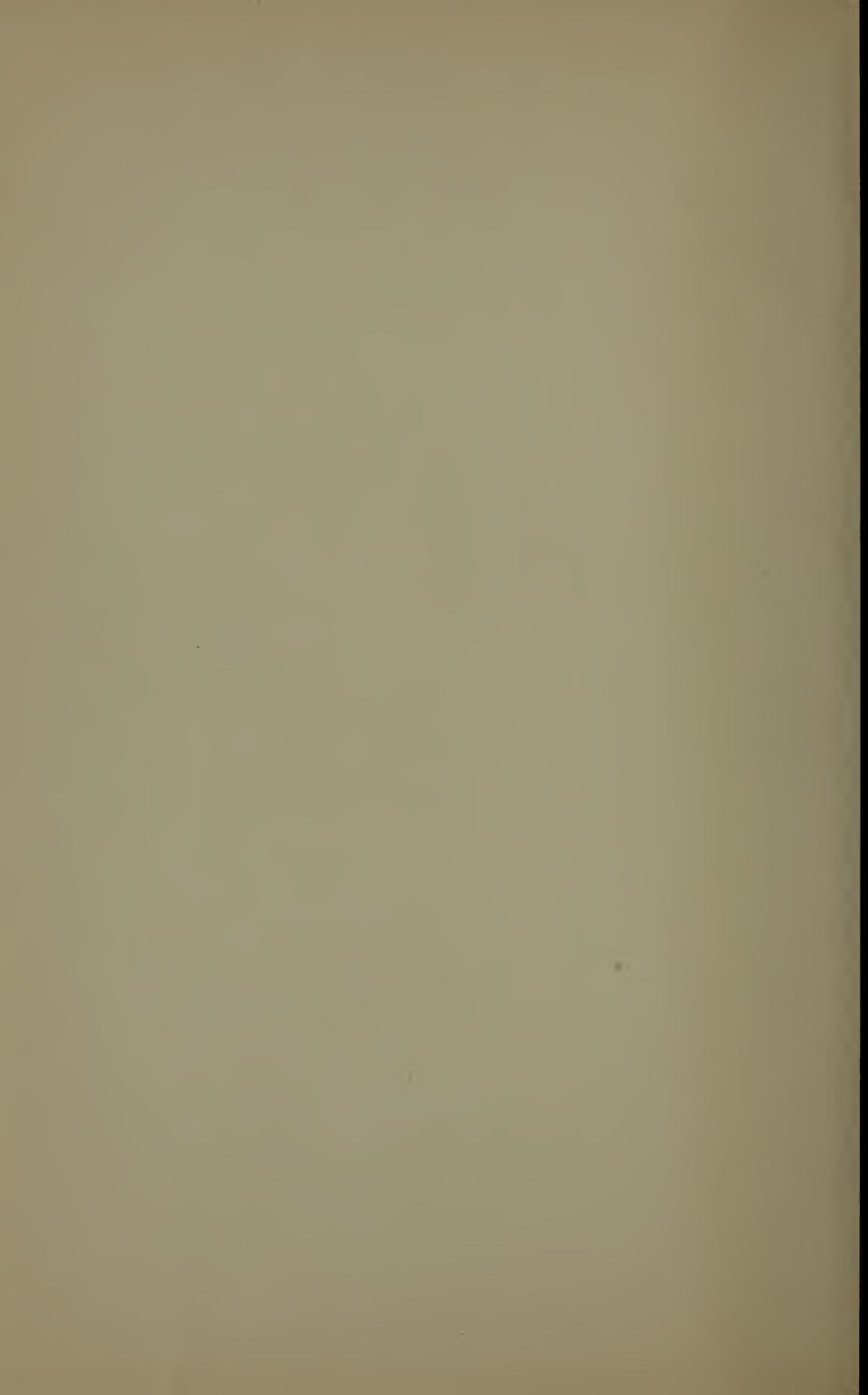


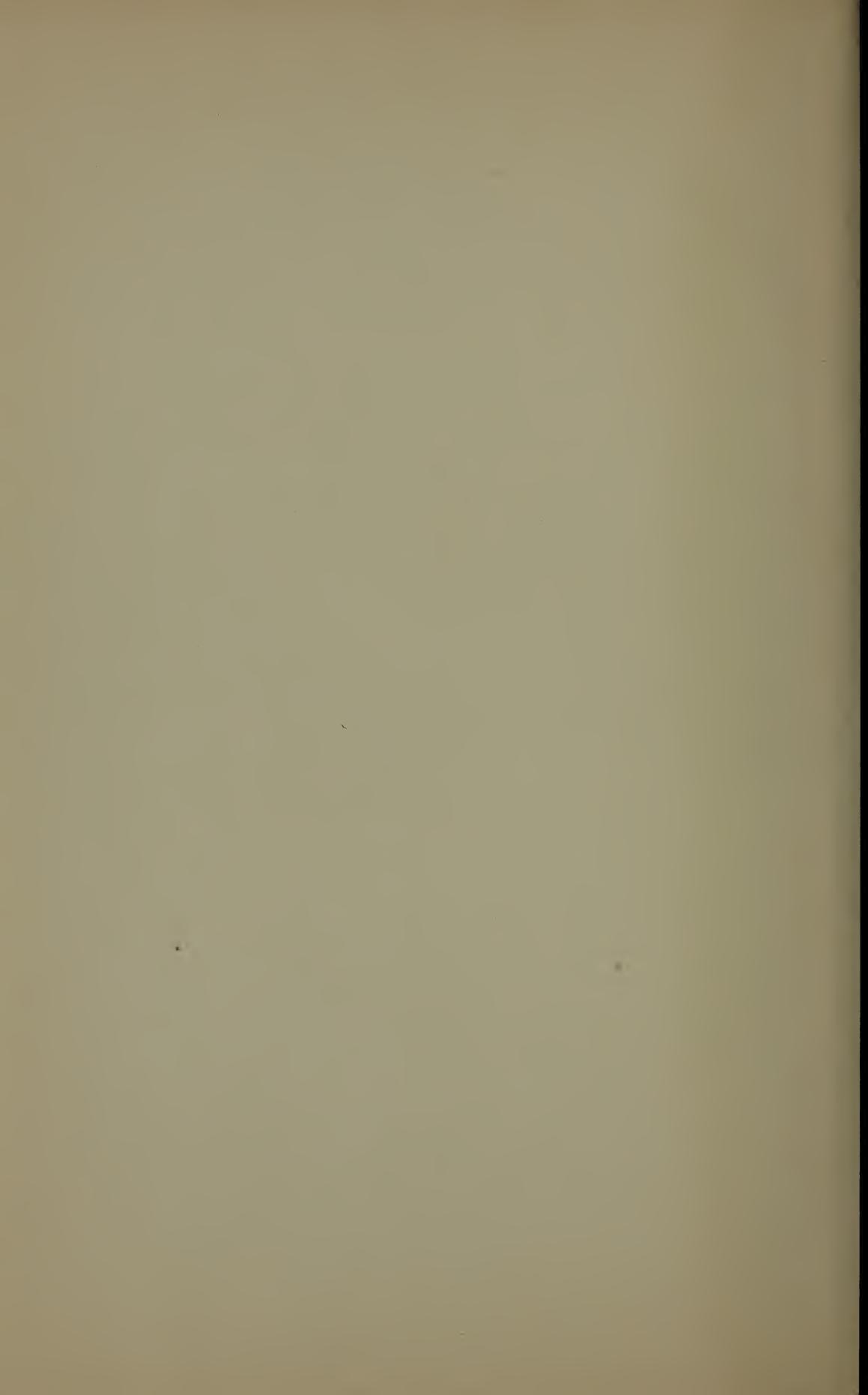
HY wait so long the staid chrysanthemums,
To slow expand, nor at their lot repine?
Why wait they until the time of faintness comes,
And wan and pale the stars autumnal shine?
How can these stricken plants refuse to yield
Their sober beauty to the summer's blaze,
Keep pain's existence in the bud concealed,
And languid smile as swift the year decays?
Strange lives that come to make a round complete;
Blossom and flower surviving numberless;
'Tis but a world all pallid now they greet,
Companionship to keep with weariness:
Therein we see the end to passion's heat,
The calm that follows life's fierce toil and stress.



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